

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

DPW-01 IO-12 RSR-01 EUR-25 AID-20 /140 W

----- 122819

P R 070835 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1271

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 7944

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 WEEKLY CEASEFORE OVERVIEW, APRIL 29 - MAY 5, 1973

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FRON AMCONSUL NHA TRANG 5 MAY 73
REPEATED

TO YOU FOR YOUR ACTION AND INFO. QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L NHA TRANG 0467

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 WEEKLY CEASE- FIRE OVERVIEW, APRIL 29- MAY 5

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY THIS WEEK SETTLED DOWN TO A REGULAR PATTERN:
ENEMY/ INITIATED INCIDENTS AND OTHER CONTACTS, EVEN ALLOWING FOR
INCOMPLETE REPORTING, AVERAGE NO MORE THAN TEN PER DAY. WELL
OVER HALF OF THESE INCIDENTS AND CONTACTS OCCURRED IN NORTHERN
BINH DINH, WHICH ALSO GOT 80 OR 90 PERCENT OF MR 2' S AIR MISSIONS
DURING THE WEEK. THE RELATIVELY FEW INCIDENTS REPORTED ELSEWHERE
WERE MAINLY IN PHU YEN AND BINH THUAN, AND THERE WAS VERY LITTLE
ACTION ANYWHERE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS.

2. DURING THE WEEK WERE ABLE TO CONFIRM AN INSTANCE OF ACCOMMODA-
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TION IN WESTERN PLEIKU PROVINCE THAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LARGELY EFFECTIVE IN KEEPING OPPOSING FORCES SEPARATED ALONG QL-19- WEST BETWEEN THANH AN AND DUC CO. ALSO DURING THE WEEK, HOWEVER, THE ICCS DECIDED THAT THE ICCS ENTRY- POINT TEAM AT DUC CO SHOULD BE EVACUATED, AT LEAST UNTIL LIVING CONDITIONS THERE ARE IMPROVED, AND THE PRG EVIDENTLY AGREED AT LAST TO ALLOW THE EVACUATION. THE ICCS TEAM IS EXPECTED TO LEAVE DUC CO TODAY, MAY 5. WE IMAGINE THAT THE PRG' S RELUCTANCE TO SEE THE ICCS DEPART WAS BASED LARGELY ON THE TEAM' S VALUE AS INSURANCE AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF GVN MILITARY ACTION DIRECTED AT THE DUC CO AREA. MEANWHILE, GVN PROVINCE AUTHORITIES IN PHU YEN TOLD US THEY HAD REJECTED VC PROPOSALS-- CONVEYED BY RADIO LAST MONTH-- FOR AN " ACCOMMODATION" CONCERNING INTERPORVINCIAL HIGHWAY 7 B.

3. ALTHOUGH THE HIGHLANDS ARE SO QUIET, NEITHER TOP- RANKING GVN COMMANDERS NOR ELEMENTS OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION THERE ARE AT EASE IN THE PRESENT SITUATION. THE COMMANDER OF THE 23 RD DIVISION RELAYED TO HIS STAFF THE MR 2 COMMANDER' S CONCERN AT THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW ENEMY OFFENSIVE IN THE PLEIKU- KONTUM AREA AT SOME UNSPECIFIED TIME OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. OUR POLOFF IN BAN ME THUOT REPORTS CONSIDERABLE APPREHENSION IN DARLAC PROVINCE OVER CONTINUING REPORTS OF ENEMY TANK AND TRUCK MOVEMENTS, A MILITARY CLIMATE SOMEWHAT ANALAGOUS TO THE SITUATION WEST OF KONTUM MENTIONED IN OUR LAST WEEKLY.

4. RUMORS OF THIS NATURE SEEM TO BE FLYING IN THE HIGHLANDS LARGELY ON THE STRENGTH OF HEARSAY, AND ANY SOLID BASIS FOR THEM SEEMS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO PIN DOWN. THE BAN ME THUOT POLOFF, FOR EXAMPLE, VISITED THE ISOLDATED MONTAGNARD ENCLAVE OF TIEU ATAR IN EXTREME NORTHERN DARLAC AND COULD FIND NO ONE WHO HAD ACTUALLY SEEN AN ENEMY TANK OR HEAVY TRUCK, ALTHOUGH A FEW PERSONS CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD SUCH VEHICLES ALMOST NIGHTLY, AND MORE KNEW PEOPLE WHO HAD. SIMILARLY, A PARISH PRIEST WEST OF KONTUM CITY HAD PERSONALLY SEEN ONLY ONE DODGE TRUCK BEING USED BY ENEMY TROOPS OR CIVILIANS.

5. IN SHORT, THERE IS UNDOUBTEDLY SUCH ENEMY ACTIVITY GOING ON IN THE HIGHALNDS AND SOME OF THE POPULAR CONCERN IS JUSTIFIED, YET SOME OF THE CURRENT UNEASE SEEMS TO DERIVE FROM PRESENT SPECTERS AND PAST EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN
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FROM VERIFIABLE REALITY.

6. ALSO DURING THE WEEK THE MR 2 COMMANDER CONVENED HIS PROVINCE CHIEFS AND DIVISION COMMANDERS FOR A REVIEW OF R & D PROGRAMS IN THE MARCH- APRIL PERIOD. THIS ALL- DAY MEETING FOCUSED ON PROBLEMS AND DEFICIENCIES AS MUCH AS ON POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT THE CRITIQUES WERE LESS PROFOUND AND THE WHOLE EXERCISE SEEMED TO US SOMEWHAT LESS IMPRESSIVE THAN A SIMILAR ONE HELD

ON MARCH 8.

7. THE ICCS WAS RELATIVELY INACTIVE DU
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